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ABSTRACT

This paper provides the text, both introduction and more detailed description, of a "photoessay" photoessay developed by a participant in the Fulbright program in Mexico. The "photoessay" was presented at the participant's school. Viewers comments are included in the paper. The paper also briefly describes an educational exchange between the participant's school, Newton North High School, in Newton, Massachusetts and La Escuela Preparatoria de la Universidad de Guenajuato, a school in Mexico. (EH)

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ED 421 413

Description and Explanation of "Photo Essay" of the Fulbright Summer Seminar Abroad in Mexico Presented at My School, Newton North High School, Newton, MA

Information and Correspondence Regarding Formation of Educational Exchange between Newton North High School and La Escuela Preparatoria de la Universidad de Guanajuato

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Submitted by

Denise R. Cremin

SO029037

EXPLANATION AND DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

I chose to undertake a twofold project. First, I had planned to present a "photo essay" of about 100 photos of our Fulbright trip in the library at my school. It took place at the end of October. Enclosed you will find the text, both introduction and more detailed description, of that exhibition. In addition, I provided a book for comments by students, administrators, and parents regarding the content of the photos: what they thought, what they knew about Mexico and had reaffirmed, and what they learned by seeing the images that were presented. Also included in this paper are some of the comments made by this audience.

My reason for presenting a photo show in the library as opposed to a curricular project in my classroom is the following: many of our Latino students do not take traditional Spanish language classes. I wanted them to see, to recognize, to identify with images from their own culture. The Latino Club's parent dinner held its coffee and dessert reception in the library so that parents could also see images of what may be their home country. I employed some of the Latino Club members who were photography students to help develop and enlarge the photos. One Puertorican girl who helped me brought the photos home to her family and said that they were all struck by how familiar and like home the images seemed.

Likewise, I felt that having the exhibit in the library would afford many more students to see and learn. Around the borders of the displays, I also included newspaper articles about Mexico that begin in June of this year until recently and which cover topics such as the elections in July, drug issues, poverty, Popocatepetl, Governor William Weld's attempts to become ambassador, weather anomalies due to El Niño, and art and literature. I have had very positive feedback from many people in the school and the community.

The second part of my project and one of my primary goals while in Mexico this summer has been to establish an exchange program between my school and a Mexican school. It is a home stay program in which students live with Mexican families for the month of February. In March or April the Mexican students come to the U.S. to live with those American students who lived with

them. It is a true living experience for both parties. Through contact made with Victor Ramírez at the University of Guanajuato this summer, and with continuing correspondence between myself and Juan Durán, the head of the Escuela Preparatoria Oficial de Guanajuato, I have the great opportunity to bring 20 students to Guanajuato in February. The Mexican students will arrive in Boston on April 3rd and stay until the 18th. I am currently trying to convince them to come a week earlier so that they may stay three weeks instead of just two. I have also included all of the correspondence that has occurred between Boston and Guanajuato.

I have found it difficult to translate the fruits of my experience through the Fulbright Commission into text. I could have written a paper but I felt that an active/interactive approach to dispersing knowledge, feeling, understanding would better serve the school and community in which I work. I have enclosed a computer disc (although I know that I shouldn't have) on which I've scanned all of the photos which I used for the show in the library. I hope that you have the opportunity to view them and that I have another opportunity to participate in the Fulbright Commision's Seminars.

INTRODUCTION

This summer I had the great fortune to receive a Fulbright Scholarship. I traveled for five weeks with a group of teachers to Mexico in order to study the Mexican education system, culture, politics and society. With our group of sixteen, I traveled to eighteen cities, participated in fifty conferences, visited forty-nine archaeological sites, discussed conditions of education in fourteen schools, and toured four industries. All in five weeks!! It was a rigorous program, but one from which I learned a great deal. I had not known that Mexico was such a diverse country both in its people as well as its landscape.

Its history is rich and revolutionary, steeped with ancient traditions from the people who populated it thousands of years ago: the Aztecs, the Maya, the Olmec, the Chichimec, the Mixtec, the Zapotec. Its modern history is also tumultuous: Padre Miguel Hidalgo who shouted, "Death to the Spaniards!" and began the Revolution to free Mexico from Spanish rule; Benito Juárez, the only indigenous president to ever lead Mexico, a man who ushered in the Reform Period and instituted a new constitution which guaranteed freedom of education and freedom of speech; Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata who led the "Revolution of 1910" against the dictator Porfirio Díaz who had deposed Juárez; and the "revolucionarias", the women who fought against the dictatorship and about whom we hear very little.

The U.S. and Mexico have been intertwined since the beginning of history and remain so linked now. Its current events have led Mexico to prominence in the news media both in our country and abroad. The elections of July 6th of this year ousted the ruling PRI (partido revolucionario institucional) and led to new powers being granted to the mayor of D.F. (Mexico City). NAFTA has created its own "lío" by creating a work atmosphere in border towns reminiscent of Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath. Workers are earning $3.50/day in cities such as Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana just across the border from prosperous American cities such as El Paso and San Diego. Going further south to areas such as Guadalajara, the salary rises to $16.00/day. Some may say that those are decent wages for "Mexican living", but in truth they are not especially when prominent American companies are earning millions in profits. These conditions, in addition to a large population that lives in rural Mexico, outside of the cities where the work exists, promote a cycle of poverty that can be seen throughout the country.

In addition, American companies who have moved to Mexico due to NAFTA no longer have to adhere to environmental laws for dumping and cleanup. The laws exist in Mexico, but are, unfortunately, not enforced. The rate of anencephaly (a congenital condition which results in the absence of all or part of the brain) in border towns both in the U.S. and Mexico has increased and it is believed to be due to the high levels of toxic pollution being produced by these companies.

One of the archaeological sites that I was able to visit highlights our anthropological relationship. It was discovered during the early-mid part of this century and has been excavated since then. The site, Paquimé, in a city called Nuevas Casas Grandes, is built much like many Hopi Indian dwellings found in the southwestern United States, in states such as Arizona and New Mexico. This relationship creates a new geographical area for the establishment of Native Americans that comprises both the U.S. and Mexico. This fact is not surprising considering that before that land was fought over and annexed by the U.S., it formed part of Mexico.
Other historical and archaeological sites which emphasized the diversity and differences between our cultures and that I was able to visit included Teotihuacán and Tenochtitlán in D.F., the museum dedicated to Pancho Villa in Chihuahua, and the Museum of Anthropology in Jalapa which houses the "colossal heads" that were created from one solid piece of basalt rock by the Olmec people. The archaeology and history of Mexico have also greatly affected its art and architecture.

Diego Rivera, perhaps the most famous Mexican artist to ever live, included the history and archaeology of his country within his art. His murals frequently depict the conditions of the working class, mostly campesinos, or the history of Mexico, such as the Aztec settlement in what is now Mexico City. He also portrayed modern history in ways such as painting his own likeness as José Morelos, a reform revolutionary who led a movement for agrarian reform and who decreed that Mexicans could no longer consider themselves Mestizo, Indio, or anything other that American. His mural for the Rockefeller building in New York was rejected and removed by Rockefeller himself because it dealt with issues such as the destructiveness of capitalism and how industry entraps the poor.

Other famous muralists such as José Clemente Orozco frequently treated political themes such as fascism and conquest, and those who fought against it such as Hidalgo. Camarena has taken his subjects from ancient history. Tamayo, an indigenous artist and muralist, uses themes from modern Mexican life as his subject. Juan O'Gorman used late 19th and early 20th century Mexican history and current events for his mural painting. David Siqueiros was imprisoned for his

anti-governmental ideas that were expressed in his art. Frida Kahló, who was not a muralist, but perhaps the most celebrated Mexican artist, rivaling her husband Diego Rivera, for greatness, also used themes and symbols of ancient and current history within her paintings; however, her most powerful works express the personal trauma and tragedy that she had suffered in her lifetime.

Not only have politics influenced the art of Mexico, but its Catholicism has also produced much art particularly in its representation of Mary, the Mother of Christ. Mexico's Catholicism has celebrated the Virgin Mary as opposed to the life of Christ Jesus. This "phenomenon" is called "Marianismo", or worship of Mary. In churches and cathedrals it is she, not Christ, who appears behind the sacristy and the altar. The "Virgen de Guadalupe" is the most famous image of the Holy Mother. She is the one who is surrounded by palm leaves in a sort of spiky, bodily halo. The story is that she appeared to a peasant, Juan Diego, on the site which now holds the Basilica in Mexico City, on his cloak and asked that a church be built on that spot.

The cloak is kept behind the altar of the second church built at the site, the first having succumbed to structural damage. It is perhaps the most important religious site in the country with hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visiting each year. What struck me about the huge Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was how the inside is very much designed like a beehive with its cells and honeycombs. The cloak of Juan Diego, with its image of Christ's Mother, is at the center like a queen bee, and the pilgrims are doing the good work of the Holy Virgin as her drones, or worker bees. My Mexican friend told me that the cloak, like the Shroud of Turin, had been tested and carbon dated and had no earthly materials in its composition. While I may remain a doubting Thomas, and am reminded that Catholicism was forced upon the Mexicans by the conquistadores, I am moved by the faith of the Mexican people and their strength in their beliefs such as journeying to the Basilica in order to behold the image of La Virgen de Guadalupe on their knees. There are churches that exist, too, which combine the beliefs of catholicism with those of more ancient, indigenous religions.

One indigenous people I had the experience to encounter was the Tarahumara. Although they live in the cliffs, in great poverty, they are a resilient race who live in the cliffs and canyons of the state of Chihuahua. During the revolution of1910, the dictator Porfirio Díaz tried to inscript these native people. They escaped the soldiers, and, being cliff dwellers, sought refuge within the enormous "Cañón de Cobre" or "Copper Canyon" which is larger than our own Grand Canyon. They were never found by the soldiers.

Today the Tarahumara earn a living by selling crafts to tourists. They avoid unnecessary contact with outsiders, in part because they do not speak very much Spanish and no English. The government is currently instituting educational programs in the Tarahumara language in order to increase attendance at educational facilities. I was taught to count to five in Tarahumara by the eight year old guide who brought us to see the waterfalls in Creel. He was hesitant to even speak to me in Tarahumara, but eventually gave in to my pleas and even laughed at my attempts.

I was changed by my journey. I had very little knowledge of Mexico and I found that I learned much more about it than I had ever imagined I could. I was so struck by it that our Spanish language exchange will be going to Guanajuato in February to live with Mexican families and to attend school.

I hope that by seeing these images of a country close to us in history, development, and proximity you are seeing something new about our neighbor. Throughout the display, you will find additional commentary and questions about many of the photos. I have also included newspaper articles that appeared in local papers during the time that I was in Mexico and since then. They depict both the positive and negative aspects of life in modern Mexico. I think that they make a powerful contrast to the images that you are seeing.

In addition, I have placed a book at the beginning of this exhibit. When you have finished seeing the photos, please comment on them. I welcome your opinion, ideas, and/or questions about anything that you have seen or read here. Perhaps you have identified with someone in a photograph or with an idea described in the text. Please tell me about your experience.

Thank you for your attention.

Denise Cremin

I wish to thank the following people for their help and support:

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LILIBETH ORTEGA

SUSAN HUNTOON AND THE LIBRARY STAFF

SANDRA TRUANT

RON MORRIS

Por favor, firme el librito que hay y escriba sus comentarios y pensamientos sobre esta exhibición. Lo agradecería mucho.

Please sign the small book provided and write your comments and thoughts about the exhibit and images which you have seen.

Thank You

List of Photo Titles

STRUCTURES

La Catedral de Guadalajara
The Cathedral in Guadalajara

La Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Teotihuacán, Templos del Sol y de la Luna
Teotihuacán, Temples of the Sun and the Moon

Teotihuacán, Templo de la Luna
Teotihuacean, Temple of the Moon

La Catedral de San Miguel de Allende
The Cathedral of San Miguel de Allende

La Iglesia de Tonanzintla
The Church of Tonanzintla

La Catedral de Dolores Hidalgo
The Cathedral of Dolores Hidalgo

La Excavación en Paquimé
The Excavation at Paquimé

Paquimé y Nopales
Paquimé and Prickly Pears

ART & ARCHITECTURE

Tabla Maya
Mayan Tablet

Escultura en el Convento de Acolman, DF
Sculpture at the Acolman Convent

Teotihuacán, Cabezas de Qutzelcoatl y Tlaloc
Teotihuacán , Heads of Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc

Templo de Quetzalcoatl, Teotihuacán
Temple of Quetzalcoatl, Teotihuacán

Tenochtitlán, Pared de las Calaveras
Tenochtitlán, Wall of Skulls

Tenochtitlán con Catedral, D.F.
Tenochtitlán and Cathedral, Mexico City

Mural de los Guerrilleros Aztecas, Tlaxcala
Mural of Aztec Warriors, Tlaxcala

Mural de Los Conquistadores, Tlaxcala
Mural of the Conquistadors, Tlaxcala

Diego Rivera: Hernán Cortés y La Malinche,
Palacio del Gobierno, DF
Diego Rivera: Mural of Hernán Cortés and
La Malinche, Government Building, Mexico City

Rivera: Mural de los Aztecas, Tenochtitlán
Rivera: Mural of the Aztecs at Tenochtitlán

Estatua de Don Quijote, Museo del Quijote, Guanajuato
Statue of Don Quijote, Don Quijote Museum, Guanajuato

EL MERCADO

Vendedora de Verduras, Mercado de Tlaquepaque
Vegetable Seller, Tlaquepaque Market

Vendedor de Chiles, Mercado de Tlaquepaque
Chile Pepper Vendor, Tlaquepaque Market

Mujer Vendiendo Dominicanos, Mercado de Jalapa
Woman Selling Bananas, Jalapa Market

Vendedora de Flores, Mercado de Jalapa
Flower Vendor, Jalapa Market

Vendedora de Pescado y Jaiba, Mercado de Jalapa
Fish and Crab Vendor, Jalapa Market

La Entrega de la Leche, Guanajuato
Milk Delivery, Guanajuato

Almuerzo para Llevar, Divisadero
Lunch to Go, Divisadero

La Tortillera, Mercado de Tlaquepaque
The Tortilla Maker, Tlaqupaque Market

LA HISTORIA

Foto y Bandera de Sufragistas Mexicanas, Museo de Pancho Villa en Chihuahua
Photo and Flag of the Mexican Suffragettes, Pancho Villa Museum, Chihuahua

Abraham Lincoln, Benito Juárez, and Simón Bolívar,
por Gabriel Flores, Palacio del Gobierno, Chihuahua
Abraham Lincoln, Benito Juárez, and Simón Bolívar,
by Gabriel Flores, Government Building, Chihuahua

Estatua Dedicada al "Grito de Dolores" y al Padre Miguel Hidalgo,
El Libertador
Statue Dedicated to the "Shout of Death to the Spaniards" and to Father Miguel Hidalgo, The Liberator

Miguel Hidalgo, Pintado por José Clemente Orozco, Guadalajara
Miguel Hidalgo, Painted by José Clemente Orozco, Guadalajara

Juárez y Morelos por Orozco, Guadalajara
Juárez and Morelos by Orozco, Guadalajara

THE OLMEC CIVILIZATION

Cabezas Colosales de la Civilización Olmeca,
Museo de Antropología, Jalapa, Veracruz
Colossal Heads of the Olmec Civilization,
Museum of Anthropology, Jalapa, Veracruz

Carla y Rosa, San Miguel de Allende

Lucero, La Antigua, Veracruz

Mexicano Detente:

Esta es la raíz de tu historia, tu cuna y tu altar. Oirás la voz silenciosa de la cultura más antigua de Mexico, tal vez la de la civilización madre de nuestro continente. Los olmecas convirtieron la lluvia en cosechas, el sol en calendario, la piedra en escultura, el algodón en telas, las pergrinaciones en comercio, los montículos en tronos, los jaguares en religión y los hombres en dioses.

30.X.1986 Agustín Acosta Lagunes

Mexican citizen stopped here:

This is the root of your history, your cradle and your altar. you will hear the silent voice of the most ancient culture of Mexico, perhaps that of the mother civilization of our continent. The Olmecs converted rain into crops, the sun into calendar, stone into sculpture, cotton into cloth, pilgrimages into commerce, mounds into thrones, jaguars into religion, and men into gods.

LA SIERRA TARAHUMARA

Divisadero, La Barranca del Cobre
Copper Canyon, Divisadero

Hogar de una Familia Tarahumara, Chihuahua
Home of a Tarahumara Family, Chihuahua

Mujer Tarahumara Haciendo la Lavandería
Tarahumara Woman Doing Laundry

Niños Tarahumaras
Tarahumara Children

El Viaje en Tren por la Sierra Tarahumara
Train Voyage through the Tarahumara Lands

Agustín, Nuestro Guía a las Cascadas de Curazare
Agustín, Our Guide to the Curazare Falls

Mujer Tarahumara Haciendo Tela Artesana para Vender a los Turistas
Tarahumara Woman Making Traditional Cloth to Sell to Tourists

Mujer Tarahumara y Niña Vendiendo Artensanía
Tarahumara Woman and Daughter Selling Crafts

Niñas Tarahumaras Vendiendo Artesanía en la Estación de Trenes, Creel, Chihuahua
Tarahumara Girls Selling Crafts at the Creel Train Station, Chihuahua State

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Iglesia de Tonanzintla, Cholula
Our Lady of Guadalupe, Tonanzintla Church, Cholula

Ofelia Lavando la Ropa, San Miguel de Allende
Ofelia Washing Clothes, San Miguel de Allende

FACES/PEOPLE

Policías Armados con sus Palos y sus Bolsas de Almuerzo
Police Armed with their Clubs and Lunch Bags

Niña Recitando la Leyenda del Callejón del Beso
Girl Reciting the Legend of the Alley of the Kiss

Cuatro Niñas, Cuernavaca
Four Girls, Cuernavaca

La Estudiantina, Guanajuato
Troubadours, Guanajuato

Estudiantes del CETI (Centro Educativo de Tecnología e Información), Guadalajara
Students of the Technical/Vocational School, Guadalajara

Un Joven Acordeonista, Guadalajara
A Young Accordian Player, Guadalajara

Músico en la Estación de Trenes
Musician at the Train Station

Taller de Muebles, Guadalajara
Furniture Workshop, Guadalajara

Verónica y Maribel, Vendedoras de Tamarinda y Guías de Sitios Históricos, La Antigua, Veracruz
Veronica and Maribel, Tamarind Vendors and Guides to Historical Sites, La Antigua, Veracruz

Tres Maestras Menonitas de Estados Unidos
Three Menonite Teachers from the U.S.

Niño Mexicano en el Tren
Mexican Boy on the Train

Tres Niños, Taxco
Three Children, Taxco

El Panadero Cruzando el Río, Veracruz
The Bread Vendor Crossing the River, Veracruz

Tres Bajos en the Plaza Central, Veracruz
Three Bass Fiddles in the Main Square, Veracruz

Tres Niños en el Parque, Jalapa
Three Boys in the Park, Jalapa

La Limosina para la Boda, La Antigua, Veracruz
The Wedding Limo, La Antigua, Veracruz

Biblioteca de una Escuela Pública de D.F.
Library of a Public School in Mexico City

La Ciudad de San Miguel de Allende de las Colinas
The City of San Miguel de Allende Taken from the Hills

Niños Compitiendo en el SEP, D.F.
Children Working at a Competition at the Secretary for Public Education's Offices, Mexico City

El Vendedor de Pan, Veracruz
The Bread Vendor, Veracruz

Yo en el Museo de Don Quijote, Guanajuato
Me in the Quijote Museum, Guanajuato

La Bandera Mexicana, El Zocalo, D.F.
The Mexican Flag, The Main Square, Mexico City

Popocatepetl, Visto desde Universidad de Cholula
Popcatepetl, the Volcano, Seen from the University at Cholula

LOS OLMECAS

The Olmec Nation was the first great civilization of Mexico, formed between 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C. It lasted for about 3000 years until 1500 A.D. and was located in the states of Tabasco and Veracruz on the Gulf Coast of Mexico. Where did it originate? No one truly knows. The "cabezas colosales" that you see here were carved of one huge piece of basalt rock. Although no one is sure exactly to whom the faces belong, one theory is that they were players of a game called "pelota". Pelota was played on a court called a "frontón" between two teams of men. The goal was to get a heavy ball through a small ring suspended on the side walls of the court. It was difficult enough to score, but one had to do it without using the hands. Hips, legs, shoulders were all fair, but one could not throw the ball. The figures depicted by the colossal heads are wearing headgear typical of what has been seen in carvings of "pelota" games.

If one examines the heads closely, they show very distinct features including almond shaped eyes and flat noses as well as wide, full lips. Take a look at the heads carved from basalt and then at the portraits of "Carla and Rosa" (focusing on Rosa, the girl on the left) and "Lucero".

LA SIERRA TARAHUMARA

The Tarahumara, who live in the state of Chihuahua, are a very humble, timid people who choose to have little contact with Mexicans and visitors except as a necessity of survival. They are a noble race, hunters so quick and agile that they have been known to run their prey to death. They also participate in Olympic-style competitions among themselves both for speed and distance/endurance running. Part of why they do not come into contact with people is that they speak one of the many indigenous languages in Mexico. This fact has posed a problem for schoolchildren and so the Mexican government has begun schools in which classes are taught in the Tarahumara language in order to keep children in school longer. I was taught to count to five in the Tarahumara language by our guide, Agustín, who laughed at my efforts of pronunciation but, nonetheless, encouraged me to perfection. Here are the numbers spelled phonetically:

1: Bee-ray 2: O-quah 3: Bik-yah 4: Na-oh 5: Ma-li

Not only are the Tarahumara separated from modern Mexican civilization by language, but also by geography. They live high in the mountains of Chihuahua and the Barranca del Cobre. They are cliff-dwelling people and since "Copper Canyon" is four times larger and 300 feet deeper than our own Grand Canyon, it is not surprising that they have remained undisturbed by modern society.

LA HISTORIA DEL SIGLO XIX

The most important figures of the history of the 19th century in Mexico would have to be Father Miguel Hidalgo, President Benito Juárez, and the dictator Porfirio Díaz.

Padre Hidalgo shouted the "Grito de Dolores" which is not a woman's name but rather the name of the town (Dolores Hidalgo) from where he began the uprising against the Spanish rule in Mexico. This initial fight against the Spaniards took place in 1810 and the Mexican forces were successful in taking cities such as Guanajuato, Celaya, and Morelia. Hidalgo was betrayed in Querétaro and executed by the Spanish military. Independence was not achieved until 1821.

Juárez was the only indigenous president to ever rule Mexico. He was a Zapotec Indian who became president in 1855 and ushered in what is called the "Reform Period" by many. He established a new constitution guaranteeing the rights of freedom of education and freedom of speech for all Mexican citizens. He also enacted laws that cut a clear separation of church and state. Juárez was the first of three Mexican presidents to establish a relationship with United States presidents. He and Abraham Lincoln were correspondents and friends. They shared their fears over Europe; Lincoln wrote to the French who currently occupied Mexico to demand their withdrawal and to threaten intervention if they did not. They were both liberal minded and made efforts toward equality for all citizens of their countries. Lincoln had also considered the Mexican-American war to be immoral. I imagine that for these reasons Gabriel Flores, a student of Orozco, painted a mural of them together. He also included another great liberator, that of South America, Simón Bolívar.

The other two presidential relationships which were established between the U.S. and Mexico were Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Lázaro Cárdenas (father of the current mayor of Mexico City, Cuathémoc Cárdenas) and George Bush and Carlos Salinas.

Porfirio Díaz took power as dictator of Mexico in 1876. Under Díaz, financial stability began when he started to secure credit internationally, inviting in financial investors from abroad.

However, the struggle within the country was just beginning with Díaz taking land from poor peasants and farmers and attacking Indian landholdings. The beginning of the end for this despot began in 1910 when Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata began the "Revolution" and fought for the rights of the poor and indigenous people of Mexico.

THE MARKET

Unlike us in the U.S., most people in Mexico do their grocery shopping in open-air markets, los mercados. Fresh vegetables, meats, sweets, and anything else that one might need to buy are available. There are even tiny lunch stands that have one bench where you can sit down to eat a freshly cooked blue corn tortilla with cheese, chicharrón, corn, mushrooms or whatever else is being served fresh that day. The ingredients needed for the most basic Mexican dishes such as chiles and tortillas can all be purchased fresh at the mercado.

In the following photos, you can see a woman selling vegetables, a man selling chiles (there are many different types of chiles, all with different tastes and used with different recipes), and a woman making tortillas by hand. The day that I was at the market, there was a huge line for the hand made tortillas. The process is laborious since the woman had only one press for all of the tortillas she had to make. But they were fresh and people were willing to wait for them despite the fact that there was a stand right behind her with no line but which made its tortillas by machine. Quality and the freshest ingredients are characteristics of good Mexican food.

DIEGO RIVERA

The themes that Rivera chose for his murals were often from the following categories: politics (both in Mexico and international), the ancient Mexican civilizations, in particular the Aztec race, the Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, and the life of the "campesinos", the field workers, the peasants.

In the two murals here, we see two of these themes depicted. In the first is the conquest of the indigenous people by the Spaniards. In the center is Hernán Cortés, blond, blue-eyed and handsome. He is giving money to the other Spaniards who are treating the Aztecs as slaves. To his right, with her head hidden is :a Malinche, Cortés' Aztec "wife", who served as his translator. Over her shoulder she carries a baby who is much lighter skinned than she and who, upon close examination, has very bright blue eyes. This child is meant to represent the first "mestizo" or european-mexican blood mix. Cortés was so easily able to entrap the Aztec people because their god, Quetzalcoatl, had told them that he would return to them in a form that they had never seen before. When Cortés, el rubio, rode in on his horse, the Aztecs were convinced that he was Quetzalcoatl returned. He played the role well. To this day, nothing in Mexico, apparently, is named after this infamous conquistador. In the second mural Rivera has depicted what that slavery must have been like for the Aztec people.

QUETZALCOATL AND TLALOC

Quetzalcoatl, the winged serpent, and Tlaloc, the god of rain, exist not only in the Aztec religion but also in the Maya. In that belief they are called Kukulkán and Chaac. The heads seen in these photos are from the Aztec temples of the Sun and the Moon at Teotihuacán, outside of Mexico City.

The representation of Quetzalcoatl uses the wings to denote the air, the serpent form to represent an earth-bound creature, and the undulating movement of the serpent mimicked the motion and path of the rivers. It was Quetzalcoatl who told the Aztecs, or Mexicas as they were also called, that when they reached a spot where they saw an eagle with a serpent in its mouth sitting on a nopal (prickly pear cactus) that they should stop and build their city, Tenochtitlán, currently Distrito Federal.

Tlaloc is also a powerful god, being responsible for the life-giving rains that would water the crops and bring prosperity. His realm was called Tlalocan and his helpers the Tlaloques.

RELIGION

Mexico, a Catholic country, practices fervently Marianismo, or worship of the Virgen Mary, which is very strong and takes on many forms such as the portrait of the Virgen here surrounded by neon lights. Although Mexico is predominantly Catholic, some traces of other religious roots do exist. For example, in the church at Tonanzintla, we can see a form of decoration that combines the images of angels and saints with those of the winged serpent, Quetzalcoatl.

LA ESTUDIANTINA

La estudiantina is a group of university associated musicians who dress in medieval troubadours' costumes and who travel around the city of Guanajuato singing traditional Mexican songs. They begin at the Teatro Juárez and when it is time for them to begin walking, they continue singing but the crowd rises and follows them through the streets and alleys of the city. They stop at certain spots and sing some more, sell "porrones" or jugs of wine, and then continue on. Finally the growing, singing crowd reaches the university steps and sits down to listen to some more songs. The Estudiantina passes around a plate for donations and the crowd cheers for the great entertainers as everyone leaves the scene.

LAS MENONITAS

In the state of Chihuahua, there exist religious groups called Menonites. These people are of German origin, practice farming in the rural areas of the state and don't mix with the Mexican people in whose country they live. Apparently, they belong to a German ancestry and speak a form of low German rather than Spanish or English. They are very fair, with most having almost white-blonde hair.

The girls in the photo are from less strict sects of the Menonite religion in the United States. I met them on the train and found out that they speak very little Spanish and were traveling throughout Chihuahua visiting Menonite groups and spending the summer teaching them English. They were very friendly and interesting to talk to but I found it curious that the Menonites in Mexico would learn English as opposed to Spanish.

EL TEQUILA

Tequila is a primary produce of Mexico and a very profitable one although it is an extremely labor intensive process. The Maguey plant from which it comes, a type of Agave cactus, must be eight years old in order to be harvested. When it is ready, the "jimador" removes the plant with its entire bulbous root from the ground in one movement. Then he must sheer the leaves, leaving only the bare bulb. The bulb is then harvested and shredded. The shredded part is then distilled to "brew" the tequila.

There are many sayings about tequila and two of its similar libations, mezcal and pulque. Here is one about the effects of inebriation from tequila:

Los borrachos empiezan a ponerse colorados como guajolotes.
Después platicadores y graciosos como el mono.
Ya con la borrachera mayor se ponen agresivos como el león.
Y finalmente sus faces se parecen a cerdos.

Drunks begin by getting red like turkeys.
Later, chatty and comical like monkeys.
With greater drunkenness they become aggressive like lions.
And finally their features seem like those of a pig.

VIEWERS' COMMENTS

"Another thing that I was not aware of was how liberal president Benito Juárez was and that he had a good relationship with Lincoln. I thought that Mexico and the U.S. did not have close ties, and I thought that the two countries were no friendly with each other."

"That was a wonderful exhibit. It was very organized and very interesting. The photographs were amazing! They really captured the moment. I especially enjoyed the part of the exhibit that discussed the Tarahumara. I always find it very interesting to see how people in other cultures live and learn about their ways."

"I have definitely been inspired to go to Mexico. I have only been to European countries. The pictures that you took were awesome. The subjects captured the friendliness and brightness of the indigenous people. The pictures taken at the archaeological sites were lighted very well and came out great. I especially like the B&W photo of a mural of 'the great white men', for example, Abe Lincoln with Benito Juárez at the center. This showed that the Mexicans think that they have leaders comparable to those of the U.S. The picture of the enormous Mexican flag in the main square in Mexico City shows the pride that the Mexicans have in their country."

"The picture I found most touching was one of an Indian woman washing her clothes by hand over a rock, according to tradition. Intruding on the picture, however, was the plastic bucket she was using to hold water. Similarly, I found the side-by-side photos of the Mexican capital, with the flag, next to a desert scene of Paquimé and prickly pears. it was the contrasts in the exhibit that jumped out at me more than anything else."

"What struck me the most about the pictures was the array of colors. From the vegetables to the architecture, the variety of shades stood out. I especially love the picture of the clothesline from the Tarahumara people where the bright clothes were stretched out along the backdrop of a mountain."

"I also learned a lot about Mexican art and artists. Diego Rivera's murals made the Spanish Conquest come alive--also I learned about Cortés, La Malinche and the New Mestizos that resulted from the mix of European and Indigenous blood."

"What struck me from the exhibit was the powerful effect that religion and politics have had on Mexican art."

"The pictures alone, without the words, showed that there is so much history to this one country and everything there is an example of the different cultures"

"I was also intrigued by the gods that the Mexican people believe in. They must be polytheistic and have different religious ideas. What is their holy book? Do they have a separate mythology as a way to explain things? I'm curious as to how their religious beliefs work."

"Throughout all of the pictures I saw, the most prominent theme was the joining of culture from the past and the present. There were modern day buildings but there were also tiny huts made of mud and clay."

"The thing I thought to be the most surprising was when anencephaly was mentioned . It's unbelievable that the Mexicans (and Americans) could be so passive about this toxic waste when they can see what the results and consequences are."

"I was wondering how you decided on the pictures; what you wanted to focus on because if I had to make a display, I think that I would find that to be the hardest part."

"The Olmec art, in particular the colossal heads, bears extreme resemblances to the pictures of the children nearby."

"I think that it is interesting how the Tarahumara people, cut off from any outside contact by their own choice, are able to provide for themselves through their hard work and perseverance ."

"Well, Ms. Cremin, you obviously learned an extraordinary amount on your trip. It seems to me that Mexico is a country with dueling sides: old and new, Spanish and indigenous, urban and rural.

I am especially interested in the history of Mexico's invasion by the Spanish. I saw two or three times in your exhibit the mention of someone's war cry, 'Death to the Spaniards!' This I may want to explore further.

Another thing I noticed which intrigued me was the amount of beautiful clothing which Mexican women were making or selling. I would love to go to a Mexican market with some money and be able to purchase some of the clothes. And the food markets as well seemed enticing.

I didn't quite understand your mention of the Mennonites. They're a Christian sect? Overall, I found the exhibit very informative but I think that I now have more questions than I do answers about Mexico."

"I truly think that it was worth going to see the exhibit, and I was glad that you took the time to put it together for everyone in the school to see. I was very moved by the photos and the comments that you had written. Since I am Latina I could relate to them as I have had the opportunity to be in a Latin American country, to taste the culture and it';s surroundings.

Looking at the photos of the natives really reminded me of my family in the Dominican Republic. For example, the people who lived in Chihuahua (Tarahumara), because they seemed to me as if they were very humble and very hard workers. In addition, I could tell that they have to work hard in order to support their families. Plus they do not have all of the accommodations that people in the United States have. In the Dominican Republic, I saw all of the same things.

I wish I could go on but I do not have enough time right now to truly give you all of the thoughts and opinions on the exhibit. I guess we will just have to have a personal discussion one day."

"I think that the picture of Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc was an example of how cultures borrow, because I thought that the picture was of a Mayan temple because Quetzal birds are native to Guatemala."

"'Paquimé y Nopales looks very southwestern and dry, kind of what you think of when you hear of Mexico. 'El Vendedor de Pan shows the other parts of Mexico, the wildlife and greenery."

"I didn't know that they had trains"

Of the newspaper articles: "Problems--drugs and violence. I'm scared of that."

"The marketplace pictures look a lot like the marketplaces in the North End (of Boston)"

"There were many different types of clothing: some were neat, some seemed old and worn out and some seemed expensive. This also has a lot to do with the different communities, poor and wealthy."

"Some of the pictures you took were really interesting! Like the excavation at Paquimé, it looked like a maze or something! I never knew there were pyramids in Mexico, do they serve the same purpose as the pyramids in Egypt do?"

"After looking at all the pictures I liked the one with the Aztec warriors the most. I found it very colorful but I can't figure out what they were doing. I also liked the pictures of the mountains and valleys, I think they were very pretty. i also liked the cathedral. I did , however, find it disturbing that people still washed their clothes in the river and that people still used donkeys."

"I thought that the pictures were really good and I thought the little summaries were good too because they showed and told us things about the culture that I didn't know or hadn't seen before."

"I didn't know what to expect of the pictures of Mexico. I had no prejudices of the land and the society. My first reaction was that the churches were really beautiful. One of them (Tonanzintla) was a little too much on the inside. It had way too many statues and flower. That church ended up looking kind of tacky."

"There was one thing that made this presentation special. This was your ability to capture all walks of life in Mexico. Many times when you see pictures from a trip, you see misleading things because the person only captured one aspect of life. For instance, you always see the wealthy areas of the city/country but it's rare that you see the poor, working areas. You have managed to include everything: poor, rich, young, old, happy, sad, etc. These pictures give you a broad sense of Mexico as a whole. By doing this you make the presentation interesting, captivation, and most importantly, unique."

"Overall you did an excellent job, the pictures are well taken and colorful. Grade: A-"

"One photograph stuck out more than others. It was the photograph of the man with the guitar at the train station. it stuck out because it is what I, ignorantly, always pictured the average stereotypical Mexican to look like. the man wore beaten up clothing, a torn hat and had a drunken, happy look on his face. I was glad that you put this photography up because it allowed me to have an easier visual of my thoughts of Mexicans to compare with other pictures of Mexicans in the city who looked nothing like the man with the hat. The photographs showed pictures of cities which were clean and quite beautiful. This was not my original impression of Mexico and I feel that my ignorance was proven."

"I really loved the architecture. I used to think it was all ugly but cathedrals, mazes, castles, and statues and other things were really unbelievable."

"This collection really captures Mexico's diversity form the beauty of its mountains and lakes, the sweetness of Mexican kids and women, to the tough reality of its corruption."